



Town of Groton, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes

Town Council Committee of the Whole

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Town Clerk 860-441-6640
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860-441-6630

Mayor Patrice Granatosky, Councilor David Atwater, Councilor Conrad F. Heede, Councilor Rachael Franco, Councilor Rich Moravsik, Councilor Lian Obrey, Councilor Juliette Parker, Councilor Rita Schmidt, and Councilor Joe Zeppieri

Tuesday, January 23, 2018

6:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING - REVISED

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Granatosky called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chairperson Granatosky, Councilor Atwater, Councilor Franco, Councilor Heede, Councilor Moravsik, Councilor Obrey, Councilor Parker, Councilor Schmidt and Councilor Zeppieri

Also present were Town Manager John Burt and Assistant to the Town Manager Nicki Bresnayan.

3. Calendar and Communications

Councilor Obrey attended the Council of Governments meeting and an Electric Boat presentation. Councilor Schmidt received a call from Alice Foley regarding concerns with Park Road. Councilor Zeppieri received the same phone call. Mayor Granatosky received a call about a concern with the Merritt/Boulder Heights land swap. She reported on the dates that the Council discussed the issue and newspaper articles that appeared in the paper.

Mayor Granatosky offered condolences to the family on the passing of Jody Capen.

4. Approval of Minutes

2018-0012 Approval of Minutes (Committee of the Whole)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council Committee of the Whole meeting of January 9, 2018 are hereby accepted and approved.

A motion was made by Councilor Schmidt, seconded by Councilor Atwater, to adopt.

The motion carried unanimously

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

6. NEW BUSINESS

2018-0015 Filling of Library Assistant I Position

Not Discussed

2018-0020 Filling of Financial Assistant I Position

Discussed and Recommended no action taken

Cindy Landry, Director of Finance, described the request for approval to fill a recently vacated Financial Assistant I position in the Purchasing Division. She described the duties of the position and the impact of not filling the position. Ms. Landry and Town Manager Burt responded to Councilors' questions.

Councilor Atwater noted receipt of an email from the Town Manager recommending against filling

the Library Assistant I position and he asked if this position would replace it. Town Manager Burt explained that the positions are completely separate, and he will be reviewing the Library Assistant I position as part of the budget. He is not looking to add any positions; he is looking to eliminate them, but this position is needed.

A motion was made by Councilor Zeppieri, seconded by Councilor Moravsik, to authorize the filling of the Financial Assistant I position.

The motion carried unanimously.

2017-0226 Superintendent of Groton Public Schools - Update (Standing Referral)

Discussed

Superintendent of Schools Mike Graner provided a handout to the Council. In November Groton was identified as an Alliance District. Dr. Graner described 12 indicators that result in a district's Accountability Index score and explained how alliance districts are identified. No money was allocated by the legislature to Groton for Alliance District program requirements, but the state provided \$600,000. Dr. Graner then reviewed how the Accountability Index score was calculated for Groton. He reviewed target rates for the indicators for each year through 2020-21. Plans are being developed to improve in key indicator areas. A proposed budget has been submitted to the Alliance Office, which must be approved before the funds are received.

Dr. Graner responded to Councilors' questions regarding the indicators, Groton's scores, class offerings and programs. Mayor Granatosky asked Dr. Graner to post his presentation on the Groton Public Schools website. Councilor Parker asked for information on the cost to upgrade the Algebra I class.

Chairman of the Board of Education Kim Shepardson Watson gave a brief overview of the Board of Education/Town Council/RTM/City Council Liaison Committee. The group meets once a month. With Dr. Graner attending Town Council and RTM meetings, and Mr. Burt being invited to the Board of Education, communication has improved. It is up to the Council to decide if the body is still desirable.

2018-0018 Board of Education/Groton Schools Custodian and Maintenance Association Collective Bargaining Agreement

Discussed

Superintendent of Schools Mike Graner explained that the custodians' contact was negotiated last spring and they made a request regarding the pension. When a custodian is laid off, the person must cash in their pension immediately. The union asked for the ability for a laid off employee to put money back in the fund if they are recalled within the two year timeframe. Laurie LePine talked to the Town's actuary who indicated the cost impact of the change is minimal or zero. Town Manager Burt noted the change was reviewed by the Human Resources Director and he had no issues.

A motion was made by Councilor Moravsik, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

Director of Finance Cindy Landry noted that Board of Education employees are vested at 10 years. This provision would affect people who are not vested. Dr. Graner and Ms. Landry answered additional questions from Councilors.

The motion carried unanimously

2017-0303 FYE 2017 CAFR

Discussed

Director of Finance Cindy Landry, Treasurer/Accounting Manager Dee Morrison, and Vanessa Rossitto and Leslie Zoll from Blum Shapiro were present. Ms. Landry noted she had previously distributed the audit documents to the Council. The audit is required by state statutes and the

charter. *The Comprehensive Audit and Financial Reports (CAFR) has three sections: Introductory section, Financial Statements, and Statistical section.*

Ms. Rossitto distributed and reviewed a presentation on the CAFR. Blum Shapiro issued a clean opinion on the Town's financial statements. Ms. Rossitto noted two new GASB pronouncements regarding tax abatement programs offered by the Town and a new calculation of OPEB liability.

Ms. Zoll reviewed the results of the Federal Single Audit and State Single Audit. Blum Shapiro issued a clean opinion on the grants tested. The management letter suggested the Town develop checklists and written procedures as well as some General Ledger maintenance issues. Ms. Landry provided a memo to the Town Manager and Town Council addressing the auditor's comments and how they will be addressed. A fraud tip line was recently implemented through the Human Resources Department. Conducting a fraud risk assessment was discussed last year, but the cost is significant (\$25,000 to \$30,000). Another recommendation was made regarding the Board of Education and revenue recognition.

A motion was made by Councilor Franco, seconded by Councilor Moravsik, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

The Committee recessed at 8:09 p.m. and returned at 8:22 p.m

2018-0013

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Policy Presentation

Recommended for a Resolution

Jon Reiner, Director of Planning and Development Services, and Jim Damicis from Camoin and Associates were present to provide an overview of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and to ask the Town Council to schedule a public hearing on a TIF Policy for the Town. Staff has been working with a TIF Advisory Committee comprised of diverse interests. Mr. Damicis and Mr. Reiner reviewed a PowerPoint presentation about Tax Increment Financing, uses of TIF revenue, goals of TIF, a revenue sharing example, and next steps.

Mr. Damicis and Mr. Reiner answered significant questions from Councilors.

Mario DiLoreto from READCO addressed the Council and provided an overview of TIF. He reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on a proposed mixed use development in Center Groton.

By consensus, the Council agreed to schedule a public hearing for some time in February or March.

2018-0014

Economic Development Commission Annual Report Presentation

Discussed and Recommended no action taken

Susan Dowling, an Economic Development Commission member, introduced other commissioners and liaisons who were present. Ms. Dowling reviewed the Economic Development Commission's 2017 Annual Report noting 14 highlights. Ms. Dowling responded to questions from Councilors. Current Chair Catherine Young reviewed the Economic Development Commission's recommended goals for 2018. Paige Bronk, Manager of Community and Economic Development feels it is critical to have an Economic Development Commission working as a team with the administration.

The Town Council recessed at 10:09 p.m. and returned at 10:15 p.m.

2018-0017

Nautilus Dock Funding - Connecticut Port Authority Assistance Agreement and Gifting of Grant Funds to Submarine Base New London

Discussed

Paige Bronk, Manager of Community and Economic Development, explained that the Town received a \$730,000 grant from the Connecticut Port Authority to extend the Nautilus Dock for

water taxi service in the Thames River. The Town received the grant, but the implementation of the project will be handled by the Navy. The Town must accept the grant and then enter into an agreement with the Navy to gift the funding to them for the project.

A motion was made by Councilor Franco, seconded by Councilor Parker, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

Mr. Bronk addressed the anticipated positive impacts associated with the project. Any project changes would have to be approved by the Town. The dock is for general water taxi service, not just the Thames River Heritage Park.

A motion was made by Councilor Zeppieri, seconded by Councilor Moravsik, to move the question.

The motion carried unanimously.

The motion carried unanimously

At 10:30 p.m., Mayor Granatosky obtained the consensus of the Committee to continue with the meeting.

2018-0019 Agreement with the University of Connecticut for Undersea Supply Chain Consortium

A motion was made by Councilor Heede, seconded by Councilor Parker, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2017-0202 Appointment to Noank School Public Gardens Task Force

Discussed

The Noank School Public Gardens Task Force has asked the Town Council to appoint Genevieve Cerf to the Task Force.

A motion was made by Councilor Obrey, seconded by Councilor Moravsik, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

7. Consideration of Committee Referral Items as per Town Council Referral List

None.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Moravsik, seconded by Councilor Zeppieri, to adjourn the meeting at 10:33 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.